



PRESS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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BRANON SENTENCED TO 60 YEARS IN CONSPIRACY TO MURDER ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL BILLIE A. ROSEN

Today in Federal Court Judge Susan R. Bolton sentenced 40 year old Mark David Branon, of San Diego to 60 years of confinement, for Use of a Firearm in a Crime of violence in the attempted murder of an Assistant State Attorney General. Branon, facing a jury trial in Arizona State court, scheduled for April 8, 2002, surmised that if the prosecutor was dead, his case wouldn't be prosecuted. While out on a state bond of 1.7 million dollars, Branon conspired to kill his former attorney, who agreed to testify against him as well as the Assistant Attorney General. The U.S. Attorney's Office subsequently indicted Branon and he has been held in federal custody since August 2, 2002. On May 15, 2003 a Phoenix, Arizona jury also convicted Branon for engaging in a Continuing Criminal Enterprise, in which the drug conspiracy involving multi-ton quantities of marijuana, and his criminal marijuana enterprise made millions of dollars. He was also convicted of controlling 2 residences in Scottsdale, Arizona as "stash houses" where the marijuana was stored. In addition, Branon was convicted of using a firearm in a violent crime, being a felon in possession of a firearm and being in possession of a firearm with an obliterated serial number. The jury

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found the defendant conspired with others to obtain a weapon which was fitted with a silencer and had an obliterated serial number. The jury further found a gun was discharged in the attempted murder of the State of Arizona Assistant Attorney General responsible for the state court prosecution. On March 19, 2002 3 gunshots were fired through the Assistant Attorney General's window of her home. One of the rounds struck a family member one inch from his heart causing non-fatal injuries. In addition to the 60 years of confinement the Judge also signed an order for a money judgment in the amount of \$3,000,000.00.

The investigation was conducted by the Scottsdale Police Department, Glendale Police Department with the assistance of the Drug Enforcement Administration in both Phoenix and San Diego.

The prosecution was handled by Steven P. Logan, Assistant United States Attorney, District of Arizona, Phoenix, Arizona.

CASE NUMBER: CR-02-750-PHX-SRB
RELEASE NUMBER: 2003-150

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